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642 But to 'reach' and to 'control' means often wholesale exploitation rather than protection and security. Here the fundamental weakness of
661 a sovereignty in which political control is vested corporately in a ruling group, the members of which are entrusted severally with executive
669 power, is clearly revealed. In other words, in the employment of the political machinery the aspect of duty towards the state is not invariably harmonized with the aspect of class privilege Thus the peace of the country was often disturbed by the rulers themselves: one feudal lord breaking into the territory of another, levying illegal taxes; a royal messenger misappropriating tributes which he was to collect for his royal master; or a royal prince raiding on his own the countries which had paid their tribute and thus bought their claim to the 'king's peace'. King and notables alike would rally against the man who thus betrayed his loyalty to the kingdom. Punitive expeditions, loss of office, and heavy punishment were the reward of those who broke the 'king's peace' and committed what the Nupe call *cin amana* (see p. 110).

642 Revolts were quelled, raids answered with raids, war fought with war, and the 'king's peace' eventually re-established. But under conditions like this, protection and public security could be, at the best, only very unequal and unstable. The stress and tension of the system revealed itself in the various attempts on the part of the peoples of Nupe to secure better safeguards for their civic rights. Direct rebellion was the crudest, and, in fact, least efficient, weapon. Siding with one feudal lord against another, with pretenders against the ruling king, and princes against their royal overlord, meant obtaining, if not permanent security, the promise of protection and favours. Villages and districts could not choose their overlords or feudal delegates: but there are one or two indications that they could change their political status. Thus the villages of Sakpe and Kutigi claim that they obtained under *Etsu* Masaba, in return for heavier taxation, the legal franchise normally granted only to royal domains. I have mentioned the frequent efforts of the Kyedye to secure a semi-autonomous position. The Kusopa of Laboži, taking advantage of their exceptional economic position as the kola-nut planters of the kingdom, were also able to secure from *Etsu* Masaba the status of a royal domain equal to that of Beni and Kyedye.

PATRONAGE AND CLIENTSHIP

641 The privileges granted by one *Etsu* could be abolished by another. Security granted by charter could be infringed by powerful feudal lords.
566 Where the group as such, village, or district, failed to obtain permanent
675 security, individuals could seek protection of a different order: the declaration of voluntary allegiance to a feudal lord or an influential man in the capital bought his and his family's friendship and personal protection. This allegiance, which often went hand in hand with the voluntary adoption of Mohammedanism, would be initiated as a rule by

commands to the inert masses of the population in any other way' (P. Vinogradoff, in *Cambridge Medieval History*, i, p. 653).

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presents which the applicant brought his patron-to-be. A short trial period established the readiness of the 'client' to fulfil his obligations, and the ceremonial gift of a sword and turban by the patron to his new henchman sealed the pact. Such a pact involved on the part of the client gifts, services, and a regular tithe paid from the produce of his farm; on the part of the protector, help against claims, just or unjust, of other people, against the abuse of power by other feudal lords, sometimes grants of land, and invariably assistance in all matters that had to do with the central authority. In legal affairs, e.g. court cases brought before the central authority in Bida, the protector, residing in the capital, with his knowledge of state affairs and his private influence, would give invaluable help to the powerless ignorant peasant. Even to-day, peasants from the country, when summoned before the court in Bida, invariably go first to see their protector in town, ask for his help or advice, and then appear in court accompanied by one of his men—an outward sign of their close connexion with the powers that be. This system of patronage is involved in the very structure of this rigid class society; it grows to an institution which impresses its stamp on the whole social life of Nupe and indeed all the Emirates of Northern Nigeria. We may call it by the native name, *bara*-ship, from the Hausa and Nupe word *bara*, servant or serf, or by the name by which the same institution was known in Imperial Rome and in the feudal system of medieval Europe: the *patrocinium*, or clientage.[1]

Clientage, this sacrifice of freedom for the sake of political protection, is common to country and capital. But in the capital it has a variety of meanings. First, there are the men who, anxious to obtain political protection, attach themselves loosely to an important personage as his loyal followers without surrendering their independence. These men, who do not work for their patron nor bring him gifts or tributes, are called *egi kata*, 'sons of the house'—the Nupe word for adopted children. Then there are men who become *bara*—real *bara*—because they are poor, and sometimes also because they shirk hard work on the land. Impecunious craftsmen thus hope to obtain a prosperous customer; Mallams a wealthy patron who can use their services; and ex-peasants become servants in the house of their master, are given food and clothes, money for tax, and have their children educated by their patron. Here 'protection' comes to mean freedom from all more serious responsibilities. And lastly, over and above securing material assistance, attachment to a man of rank and influence is a way to secure social promotion, the chance of becoming 'somebody', of being lifted from the ignominy of a commoner's life into the sphere of rank and importance.[2] The man in town who has no land to offer, offers himself and his services. The *bara* attaches himself to the household of his patron; he is servant, messenger, major-domo, soldier in his master's private army. He may rise to the position of a trusted friend and intermarry into his

[1] See P. Vinogradoff, op. cit. i, p. 363, and v, pp. 460–2.

[2] One of my Bida informants, himself a man with numerous *bara*, divided the *bara* into three categories: those who 'are afraid' and seek protection; those who shirk hard work and responsibility; and those who are out for 'greatness'.

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patron's family. If he has been accepted as *bara* by an influential feudal lord, he may hope to be rewarded with the grant of land or a sub-fief. A title, finally, bestowed by patron on client proclaims publicly the *bara*'s position as a henchman of a man of rank. These are the titles which are usually bestowed on *bara: Sonfada*, *Mižindadi*, *Tsowa*, *Tswanya*, *Tsadú*.[1]

In all these cases the benefit is mutual. The *bara* receives material support and possibly a rank; the patron gains servants, soldiers for the contingent which he is to muster for the king's army, and followers and henchmen to add to his prestige. The patron will choose his clients and will not accept everyone. A young man of about 25, who had become a labourer, told me that he intended eventually to attach himself as *bara* to a certain nobleman, but he was as yet too young and no one wanted him. To have gathered around oneself a large number of *bara* and *egi kata* is the final, most undeniable, mark of success. Whenever you visit the house of a nobleman, at any time of the day, you will find him surrounded by some of his *bara* or *egi kata*: possibly they have just returned from an errand or have come to discuss important questions with him, or simply to pay their respects and share, as they regularly do, his meal.

Often the loyalty of clients to their patrons extends to the whole family of the *bara* and is transmitted from generation to generation. But loyalty and ambition may come into conflict. Sons may choose a new patron for themselves, hoping for increased benefits from the new association; or the *bara* himself may leave his own protector when the influence of the latter decreases and look for another more influential patron.

The *élite* of clients are the *bara* of the royal princes. Not only are they servants of masters who have ample land and sub-fiefs to bestow, but they may also rise, with their masters, to the highest positions and become, some day, *bara* of a ruling king. These royal *bara* are almost equal in rank to the nobility of the officers of state. The *Etsu* Nupe has only two *bara*, the *Mižindadi* (lit. equal to major-domo) and *Sonfada* (lit. companion on travels—the present holder of this rank sits beside the chauffeur in the *Etsu*'s car), not counting the freed slaves who play to-day more or less the role of *bara*. But the lowest *saraki* titles which the *Etsu* may bestow on his favourites are nearer clientship than nobility proper. Social climbers, rich and ambitious men, could buy themselves a clientship in the house of a royal prince or the king: *Etsu* Saidu, the late Emir, sold the title of *Mižindadi* three times over. Wealth buying a serf's title—this is indeed a paradoxical result of a social system which, intent on promotion and social rise, turns even the humiliation of clientship into a vehicle for a social career.

The complex pattern of clientship and the various motives which make free men seek patronage are illustrated in the following list of *bara* who were in the service of the late *Shaba*.

[1] Political ranks are frequently distinguished from *bara* ranks using the same title by adding the suffix *-kó*, meaning great, or the word *tsu*, meaning 'of the king', e.g. *Sonfada* and *Sonfadakó*, *Soje* and *Sojetsu*.

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566

List of Bara in the Household of the late Shaba Usman

(*Bara* titles are printed in italics)

1. Ibrahima *Madawaki*—in Bida. Formerly warrior by profession, now matmaker. Made submission to *Shaba*; his father and the rest of the family are not *bara* of the *Shaba*.
2. Etsu Ndakó—in Bida. Wealthy trader. He is the type of *bara* who is out for social promotion—a '*bara* for greatness'. He began as *egi kata* of the *Shaba*, who had no rank at that time. When Usman became *Shaba*, Etsu Ndakó made full submission, in the hope of profiting by this allegiance to the 'heir apparent' who might become *Etsu* one day and then bestow a *saraki* rank upon his client.
3. *Sommáki*—in Bida. Mat and straw-hat maker. His father was a *bara* of *Etsu* Umaru (of the same dynasty). The son followed in his footsteps, and served two *Shaba* in succession. He married a widowed daughter of his present master.
4. Yisa Gbodu—in Bida. Made submission to *Shaba*. Poor, a small trader by profession. Plays the role of a handy-man in the *Shaba* household.
5. Jiya Fugi—in Bida. Was formerly a *bara* of *Etsu* Mohamadu, the *Shaba*'s father.
6. Yisa Sharu—in Bida. He is a Mallam by profession, and became *bara* of the *Shaba* before the latter obtained his rank.
7. Mamudu Yakagi—in Bida. As No. 1.
8. Umaru Zainu—in Bida. Was formerly a *bara* of *Etsu* Maliki (of a different dynasty). He is a tailor by profession. His patron is at the same time his most profitable customer, having all dresses needed by the family made by him.
9. *Babban Ndeji*—in Bida. His father held *Ndeji* rank. When he died, his widow married the *Shaba* and took her son with her, who then became a *bara* of his stepfather.
10. Etsu Saba *Manzo*—in Bida. As No. 1. Acts as personal messenger of the *Shaba*. The title *Manzo* means messenger (in Hausa).
11. Suleiman *Gadza*—in Bida. His father was a titled slave of the *Etsu*. He gave his son as *egi kata* to *Shaba*. When the father died Suleiman's elder brother inherited the title, and the younger brother, having no prospect of obtaining a *saraki* rank, remained with *Shaba* as his *bara* and received from him the *bara* rank *Gadza*.
12. Idirisu *Madawaki*—in Bida. A very wealthy trader who became *bara* in order to obtain a title. (Cf. No. 2.)
13. Mallam Yusufu—in Bida. His father was *Alkali* of Bida, he himself formerly *Alkali* of Mokwa. Later he lost his position and became *bara* of the *Shaba*, for whom he now acts as a private 'chaplain'.
14. Mallam Mamudu—in Bida. Also a private chaplain of the *Shaba* household.
15. Jiya Man—in Bida. Another Mallam. His father was already *bara* of the *Shaba*.
16. Ndakó Tétengi—which means 'little Ndakó', to distinguish him from his father, who was called Ndakó and was also a *bara* of the *Shaba*. At that time they lived in Bida. Later they built themselves a farm settlement (*tunga*) on land given them by their patron. They live there now, paying an annual *dzankó* to the *Shaba*.

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566 17. Alhassan—younger brother of Ndakó Tétengi. Lives with him on the farm.

18. Suleiman Maidunki—in Bida. His father was a *bara* of *Etsu* Umaru. He is a tailor by profession—*Maidunki* means tailor (in Hausa). Cf. No. 8.

19. Kolo Langbogu—on a farm near Wuya. He obtained his land through his patron.

665 The social significance of clientship reveals itself, finally, in the formation of political factions. Every man of rank and standing collects 566 round him a smaller or larger group of followers, henchmen, and clients, their families, their sons, brothers, and friends, who come to look upon this man as their protector and patron. The people of rank themselves are organized similarly, on a higher plane: we have seen how they attach themselves to a royal prince from whom they expect favours, support, and, some of them, promotion to an important office or rich fief. Let me try to reduce to figures this manifold system of integration that is the result of patronage and clientship. The old *Shaba* of Bida (as our list shows) had still in the days of his waning influence nineteen *bara*. Then there were his sons and younger brothers with their *bara*—some forty men altogether (not counting women and children). Of the other nobility, members of the royal house of Umaru Majigi to which he himself belonged, and members of the *saraki* nobility bearing allegiance to this house, some eight or ten were attached to the old man in personal allegiance, each of them with his own *bara*, bringing the total to over a hundred. The number of peasants, commoners, small traders, and Mallams who, living in his neighbourhood or on one of his *tunga*, regarded themselves as his clients in a looser sense, I can only guess. In Bida itself their group included all the streets round his house, twenty to thirty houses, and the people from this group would come to the *Shaba* or any important member of his faction, whenever they were in need of advice or protection. The following of the *Shaba* must thus have amounted to over 400 men, a thousand if we count their whole families, in a town of 30,000.

665 What was said earlier in this chapter about the division of Bida into local factions or 'wards' is now fully explained. You can map out the 579 whole of Bida in such areas of personal influence and patronage. Rivalry and feuds between the leaders of the local factions may throw the whole 754 town, indeed the whole country, into a civil war. This is what happened not long ago. In 1931 the trial of a witch in Bida had deeply stirred the 683 passions of the people. A certain woman in the *efu* of the *Sokyara*, a powerful nobleman, though not at the time in favour at the court, was believed to be a witch and was accused by the people of the *efu* of having caused several deaths and cases of mysterious illness. The people feeling themselves menaced by her presence appealed for help to their patron, the *Sokyara*, who decided to expel the woman from his *efu*. She appealed to the *Etsu* and the *Alkali*; summoned before the court, she swore on the Koran that she was innocent, whereupon the *Alkali* let her go and dismissed the case. This to the enraged people appeared as a farce. The anti-witchcraft society to which the people of Nupe for-

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It will have been seen already that the land disputes which we have just described reflect more than merely disputable, equivocal land-contracts. The landlords who 'sell' the land are without exception men of the titled classes, courtiers, favourites, or former slaves of the king or of powerful noblemen, and the 'buyers' mostly commoners, peasants who have had no other chance of obtaining additional land. To-day they are coming to realize that their right to the land which they acquire is protected by the Native Court. But till very recently, in order to obtain their rights, they would have had to bribe their way through or to find a protector equal in rank and influence to the landlord who threatened to evict them—a typical source of the institution of clientship, which we discussed in a previous chapter.[1] A final example. A certain farmer had 'bought' land from D., a *bara* of the late *Etsu* Saidu. The *Etsu*, for reasons of his own, refused his confirmation of the deal—D., being a tenant of the *Etsu*, could not transfer the lease without the latter's permission—and the tenant had only one way open: he attached himself to another, more influential, *bara* of the *Etsu* and through him made various gifts to the *Etsu*, over £3 in money, a valuable civet cat, and promised besides an annual rent of two bundles of corn.

Hereditary Land: Secondary Tenantship

Clientship, combined with a métayer arrangement, becomes a factor in land-tenure also in another respect. A commoner who desired more land, or a new piece of land, could give himself into the service or 'patronage' of a landowning overlord and thus secure land as well as political protection. The conditions were: an initial gift in kind as in all pacts of clientship, occasional presents, visits and other expressions of homage, and finally a tithe (*dzankâ* again) from his millet or sorghum crop. This submission to patronage was often the only means by which the peasants in Cis-Kaduna could hope to retain their property when threatened with expropriation, and also the only means by which they could secure new land, that is, access to what under tribal conditions would have been a reserve of village land. The necessity of obtaining land and enjoying its secure possession thus constitutes another of the main roots of clientship. The lease of land obtained by these methods is hereditary, and remains in the family, a comparatively safe possession—unless political factors interfere. The tenants are rarely allowed to forget that the relationship between landlord and client implies more than merely a correct commercial relationship. Lack of respect, an apparent failure to render due homage, or behaviour suggestive of changed

Etsu himself suggested that the disputed piece of land (a river grove that was claimed by two neighbouring villages) should be bought for money by one of the parties. The purchase price fixed was 15*s*.

[1] Till very recently no peasant tenant would have dared to invoke the *Etsu*'s or *Alkali*'s help against his landlord; he would have been looked upon as somebody who had broken away from a firmly established tradition of loyalty, one-sided though it was. The tenant in the last example quoted above kept silent for fifteen years; not till 1934 did he venture to bring his case before the court and thus to obtain a final confirmation of his ownership.

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566 allegiance, suffice to make the landlord refuse a renewal of the tenancy
427 or even to cancel a running tenancy. Several cases of this kind have come to my knowledge; one even found its way to court: L., a nobleman of high rank, evicted his tenant (and this in the middle of the planting season!) because he had lacked in loyalty towards him and 'betrayed his confidence'.

427 Political changes have brought about an interesting development.
566 To-day the initiative in this kind of tenantship has to some extent
621 passed from the tenants to the landlords themselves. The landlords
567 were, as we have seen, mostly warriors and courtiers who, living in the capital, never worked their land themselves, but settled their slaves on it, and had it worked by their labour. When slavery was abolished and wars came to an end, when the 'absentee' landlords no longer needed *bara* as soldiers for their private armies and could no longer support a large household of henchmen and hangers-on in the town, they offered their land to their *bara*, and so new settlers went out into the country, occupying the land and founding new farm settlements. Sometimes the noble landowners even settled some of their relations in this fashion on the land, nephews and younger brothers, for whom no place or job could be found in town.

427 All these farm settlements, whether they were for slaves or *bara*, for
566 peasants turned client or clients turned peasant, are called *tunga*—the
621 same name that is applied to the Nupe village 'colonies'. But the 'private' *tunga* has no name of the kind villages possess, but bears the name of the noble patron to whom it 'belongs'. These *tunga* settlements are scattered all over Cis-Kaduna, and surround Bida in a dense belt. There are innumerable hamlets called Sokyara, Maiyaki, Ndeji, or similar titles of nobility—the titles of the landlords under whose patronage the settlements were founded. To our description of the village *tunga* given in a previous chapter we will add here a few examples of the 'private' *tunga*.

Etsu-Kolo (about four miles south of Bida), consisting of two compounds, two families which are distantly related. Called after the founder of the *tunga*, the father of the present family head. This Etsu-Kolo had been, like his father before him, a *bara* of the *Cekpa* in Bida. Later, however, Etsu-Kolo transferred his allegiance to the then ruling Emir, *Etsu* Mohamadu. The change of allegiance proved good policy: *Etsu* Mohamadu procured for him the position of a Village Head for the whole district with its many *tunga* settlements. Since then the family had remained faithful to *Etsu* Mohamadu's house, even after the Village Headship had been abolished again; they are still paying their regular *dzankú* to his successors, at present to the *Shaba* in Bida.

Emi Bwori ('House of Bwori', one mile north of Bida), called after a certain Bwori, the head of the guild of Bida butchers, and a *bara* of *Etsu* Umaru. This Bwori settled his own slaves in this *tunga*. The present owners of it regard themselves as *bara* of the descendants of Bwori, but have abandoned paying *dzankú* to them; but they still go to 'salute' them whenever they come up to town.

Lumanen (four miles west of Bida), a group of very prosperous *tunga* settlements, founded at different times by relations and noblemen attached to the royal house of *Etsu* Masaba. One settlement has been built by the

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father of the present *Maiyaki* for his *bara*, and is accordingly called *Maiyaki*. A second settlement is called *Emi 'tsu Saba*, and was founded in the time of the father of the present family head, who was a slave in *Etsu* Masaba's house. A third settlement was built recently, by the present family head, who was a *bara* of the present *Etsu* Saidu (also of the Masaba dynasty). All three settlements still pay their regular *dzankά* to their patrons. This year's *dzankά* amounted to one bundle of corn and ten yams.[1]

Makū (one mile south of Bida), consisting of three compounds, called after the noble patron of a certain Ndatazi, a peasant who had had a farm somewhere else first and then moved to the present site, obtaining the land with the help of the *Makū*. He lives in one of the compounds; of the other two one belongs to his brother, and one to a distant relative by marriage, who left his old farm and came here, where the land is better, also becoming a *bara* of the *Makū*. Each of the three houses pays an annual *dzankά* to the present *Makū*. It amounted this year to three bundles of corn and ten yams per compound.

Saci (three miles east of Bida), called after the *Saci* of Bida (a nobility rank). It consists of five compounds; in one a son of the *Saci* is living—the other members of his family are living in Bida—in the other compounds *bara* of the *Saci*. They have discontinued paying their *dzankά*, but still pay regular visits to their patron in town.

One word about the economic arrangement obtaining in the *tunga*. The slaves had worked the land entirely for their masters; that is to say, they had no *efakó* (family) land of their own, but were fed and clothed by their masters, and were also allotted smaller, *bucά* plots, which they were free to work for themselves. The arrangement between the landlord and the *bara* whom he settles on his land is the same métayer system which also regulates the tenantship of the free peasant who accepts clientship in order to obtain land. To-day, the difference between former slaves and *bara* has disappeared; for to most of the freed slaves their change of status meant only a promotion from slave to (free) client. Both, in a good many cases, still acknowledge this form of dependence and, as we saw, still return the annual tithe from their crops to the patron, or at least still pay their respects dutifully. The *dzankά* is no longer a compulsory tribute, and would not be upheld by the court. It is a voluntary gift which confirms the relationship of patronage and protection—a relationship which is as real to-day as it was in former times: political protection for oneself and one's children is bought cheaply with a bundle or two of corn a year.

Hereditary Land: Primary Tenantship

The acquisition of land through clientship follows the general pattern of the Nupe feudal hierarchy. A man who obtains land as a *bara* obtains it from a man of higher rank, either a royal prince or nobleman who holds the land in his own right, or from a rank-holder or titled slave or a king's *bara* who has himself obtained the land from another landlord higher up on the hierarchical scale. These 'primary tenants', however, have acquired their land by a different method, namely, through certain

[1] This census was taken in 1934, when *Etsu* Saidu was still alive.

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services which they have rendered to their overlords. Ultimately all land is derived from one source: the royal house, which again bestows land for services rendered. The title of the royal house to the possession of land is by the right of conquest. We must examine this more closely.

In the conquest of Nupe country the members of the royal family appropriated three categories of tribal land: all no-man's-land between villages, i.e. virgin land in the *cikã*, the uninhabited bush; also all village land which, once occupied, had been lying fallow for long, either because of the death of the owner or his emigration, or because a short-term lease (borrowing) had lapsed; finally, under certain conditions, the *Etsu* also seized the village land on the outskirts of the village territory, what we have called the 'land reserve' of the village. The first two kinds of land were divided up geographically between the three royal houses, as we have already seen, one receiving all land to the east of Bida, one all land to the west and north-west, and the third all land to the south of Bida. (See sketch-map, p. 81.) The last category of expropriated land (the village 'reserve') was sometimes appropriated by a ruling *Etsu* arbitrarily and irrespective of its geographical position in one of the three royal territories.[1] Of the land thus owned by the royal houses by the right of conquest the *Etsu* or royal princes of highest rank bestowed smaller or larger parcels on their followers, members of the nobility or slaves and *bara* 'for services rendered'; the land grant gave them complete and permanent rights to the land, in return for which they had to pay the usual annual *dzankã* in kind. The royal tenants—'primary tenants' as we have called them—then settled their own men in various ways on this land, either founding *tunga* settlements for them or subletting the land (or part of it) in any of the ways discussed above. Every landed property which we find in the 'conquered territory', excepting only the scattered islands of original village land, has thus been derived directly or indirectly, that is, through the hierarchy of feudal nobility, from one of the three royal houses of Nupe.

Apart from these possessions which were given away to rank-holders and henchmen the royal families have kept certain royal estates proper. This land is not transmitted in the ordinary way of inheritance to younger brothers or sons, nor is it alienable like the other lands appropriated by the royal houses, but can be claimed only by the three titled heads of the royal dynasties. Right to this special royal land is thus part of the promotion to rank and status within the dynasty and the political system at large. It implies absolute and permanent ownership; it implies more than merely the 'administrative' control over family land that is vested in the family head in the Nupe village. Yet it reflects the most essential element in Nupe peasant ownership of land—what I have called 'access' to the land in virtue of headship of the kinship group. This surprising analogy between feudal monarchy and peasant ownership is rooted in an analogy in the structure of the two groups as such, villa-

[1] Thus, for example, all the land in the district of Jima, south of Bida, belongs to the house of Umaru Majigi. But the village land of Kucigi, a village in this district, had been appropriated by *Etsu* Maliki (of the house of Usman Zaki) when he was *Etsu* Nupe and bestowed on one of his slaves, the *Cece*.

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trained, slave; for a pawn, with his restricted usefulness, one might have to pay more than twice the amount. There is no doubt, then, that the institution of pawning represented not only a profit-making, 'capitalist' investment, but also, to some extent, a 'humanitarian' duty linked with status and prestige, a crude attempt at alleviating the hardships involved in the unequal distribution of wealth. Well-educated Nupe men, themselves members of the wealthier classes, with whom I discussed pawning, even went so far as to explain pawning (at least on a moderate scale) as an institution of considerable educational value enabling the sons of the poor to study farm-work and husbandry in the houses of prosperous and enterprising men. They would admit drawbacks only in the excessive practice of pawning, which, they maintained, was a recent development, brought about by rising prices and rising cost of living. These drawbacks, as they saw them, were that with the increase in their numbers, the pawns, many of whom frequently worked together in the same household, grew lazy and irresponsible, and showed openly their resentment at having to work for strange masters. The complaints of my informants were thus that in the combination of material and moral rewards which the people of wealth and status expected from the institute of pawning, the material rewards had completely to give place to moral rewards.

A similar combination of material returns from invested wealth with benefits of a more abstract order—status and prestige—is also characteristic of the institution of clientship (already explained in Chap. VIII). The share of the 'abstract' benefits becomes larger the closer we approach forms of expenditure and investment bound up with social status: display of wealth in household arrangements, festivities, the equipment of one's retinue, and so forth. To this and similar questions we shall return later.

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have seen, not only supplies its members with efficient training, but also guarantees, to some extent, a steady market for their products. The guild-head, moreover, is enabled by the special resources involved in his position to act as the 'banker' of the group and come to the financial assistance of individual members.

Certain other economic arrangements designed to provide insurance operate outside the labour-unit, and are thus of special importance for the individual craftsmen and the free professions. The familiar recourse to clientship is a first instance. By sacrificing part of his personal freedom as well as his earnings, the *bara* buys the patronage of an influential person. Though this patronage will be appealed to specially against the 'extraneous' risks due to political factors, it plays a part also in more 'normal' circumstances. Thus I found that a barber had recently become the client of a certain nobleman in his quarter of the town in order to secure a regular and good clientele; it is significant that the father of the barber had not been a *bara*, i.e. had not felt the need to 'insure' his more prosperous business. A young hat-maker told me that he intended to attach himself as *bara* to an influential rank-holder, with whose help he hoped to start business as a trader. I have also spoken of the Mallams and drummers, to whom clientship means the guarantee of success in their profession.

A different method of insuring against risks is embodied in the practice of borrowing money. 'Pawning' represents the firmly institutionalized form of borrowing—an institution which provides against normal as well as abnormal risks, and in which a social relationship closely akin to that of patron and client forms the basis of the financial transaction. Other forms of borrowing occur irregularly, and with a narrow scope. No professional money-lenders exist; the individual in need of money borrows it mostly from close relations, more rarely from friends or 'patrons'. The most frequent form of borrowing is for a husband to borrow from his wife. An indirect form of borrowing money from one's wife, not uncommon in Bida, is the practice of wealthy women to contribute to the bride-price of their sons and to other expenses, which, in accordance with Nupe kinship ideas, should be borne by the father.

A final insurance arrangement is provided in a specific financial institution operating somewhat on the lines of a 'pooling club'. It is called *dashi* in Nupe (*adashi* in Hausa) and plays—or used to play—a very important part in Nupe economy. We must describe it here in detail.

The *dashi* is a pure business arrangement, a free association of a number of men and women who agree to enter this financial co-operation for a certain limited period. Each member undertakes to pay regularly (for example, every week, or five days, or every month) a certain amount of money into a common fund, as many times as the group numbers members. Each time when the contributions have been collected a different member is entitled to draw the total fund, until every member has had his share. Members may also contribute double subscriptions, and then be entitled to two 'draws' in the course of the *dashi*. The allotment of the fund does not follow a fixed rule, but is left to the head of the group to work out. A member who is urgently in need of money can

3: Forde E-4 (no date) 1955 FF52 Nupe FF52

565 Below the *sarakiši* comes a group of minor office-holders, heads of the Bida craft guilds, who receive their titles and the customary gift of a turban from the *Etsu*. The head of the Bida brokers, who acts as an agent for the king in trade and commercial matters in the capital, holds a similar position.

565 567 The lowest titled class in the Nupe social order is that of the *ena wuši*, whose members bear the titles of the former court slaves.[13] Formerly these titles were held by men of high birth captured in war and given titles in return for loyal service; they could rise in the service of the king as bodyguards, police, messengers, tax collectors, etc. A new king usually took over the officials of his predecessor.

565 Below the orders of title-holders come the commoners (*talakiši*), who constitute the great majority of the population.

Patronage[13]

566 675 A system of patronage or clientship is an important feature of Nupe society. The client (*bara*) attaches himself to the household of his patron as a servant or in some other capacity from which he may rise to the position of a trusted friend and may even marry into the patron's family. Clients may be divided into three categories: those who seek political protection without surrendering their independence, who do not work for their patron but are regarded rather as "adopted children"; those who are poor and anxious to avoid hard work on the land; and those who hope to achieve some eminence by attaching themselves to a man of position and influence. The clients of the royal princes may rise to high positions and eventually become the *bara* of a ruling king, their rank then being almost equal to that of the official nobility. Indeed, rich and ambitious men may even buy themselves a clientship in the house of a royal prince or of the king.

The system is beneficial to both parties, the client receiving material benefit and protection and possibly a title, and the patron acquiring servants, soldiers for the contingent he must provide for the king's army, and followers to add to his prestige.

Age-sets[14]

561 Boys and young men in a village or town are grouped in three graded associations: *ena wáwágiši*, for boys between the ages of about 10 and 15; *ena dzákangiši*, of ages *c.* 15 to 20, and *ena gbarúfuši*, of ages *c.* 20 to 30. Every age-set (*ena*) passes successively through these grades. Except in the capital, there is only one set or association in each grade within the local community at any one time. Each is led by an older man or by a boy from the highest rank of the next grade. The head of the highest, known as *ndákotsú*, is chosen from among adults and has considerable influence. The main emphasis within the age-sets is on seniority. Titles, often copying those for adults in the wider society, are distributed by the leader on the basis of reputation, ability, and merit, sometimes anticipating the future rank of the holder. Those acquired in the highest grade may be retained by the young man for life. The chief public functions of the sets lie in the execution of co-operative tasks, but they also have a recreational side.

For girls, an association (*ena*) exists only for the lowest age-set.

Government[15]

631 Prior to the more recent developments of local government, the Nupe kingdom was divided into four zones for the purposes of political, judicial, and tax administration. The first was the territory of the conquered and tributary "outside" peoples; the second, within the boundaries of the kingdom proper, included the

[13] For a description of slavery proper, see below, p. 41.
[13] Nadel, 1942, pp. 122–7.
[14] Nadel, op. cit., pp. 383–401; 1935a, pp. 269–71, 292.
[15] Nadel, 1942, pp. 115–18

462 The Nupe women have many occupations besides the ordinary household duties. Her obligations as a wife are to prepare the food, and bring firewood and water. They spin, weave, cook little cakes for the market, or practise hair-dressing, a lucrative profession, for a reputed coiffeuse receives 6d. to 1s. a head, according to the elaboration of the dressing, though no client presents herself more than once every moon. There are also women doctors, who attend both male and female patients, and receive the same fees that a man doctor would do. The Nupe women are above all things traders, and will often travel great distances on this behest. On these occasions they are accompanied 463 by their husbands, but the first wife is left at home by right of 439 her position. Usually she prefers so to remain; if she rebels, her husband asks her not to come on account of the loss of dignity, but if she persists he yields. In the early days of her married life, before there are other wives and dependants, she may trade in the neighbourhood three months after her wedding, and when [562] there are two wives the elder will often take it in turns to go out with the younger. At no time may she leave the compound, however, without her husband's permission.

462 The women do a good deal of out-door work. They collect 562 the produce of all trees, except palm-oil and kola trees, the former 439 of which were a reserve of the Emirs, but are now divided between the occupier and the Chief of the town, and the latter are kept by the men. These they may sell for their own benefit, after first deducting in every case what will be required by the household throughout the year. Women also cultivate and sell ground-nuts and all root-crops, such as ochro, which do not require transplanting. Men do all transplanting and, therefore, own such crops as cassava, sweet potatoes, onions, etc., but it is the women who have the right to sell them, and as they usually keep a commission of 25 per cent. it is a valuable right. If, however, a man finds he is being given unusually high prices he rewards his wife with a liberal gift of cloth. It is the man who tends and owns all grain and, therefore, sells it for himself, but he is thought ill of if he does not first consult his wives as to the price he is to accept for it. They sow the corn and help to garner it after it is reaped, and each woman has charge of so many bundles, as to the sale of which she must be consulted. She expects some small present for her trouble.

566 When a household becomes rich, that is to say when their 556 property, if sold, would realise £20 to £40, a number of people 736 of both sexes ask leave to become their dependants. The master of the house will take no children without the consent of their parents, but a poor man will frequently desire his protection for them. They are then treated as children of the house, they are given food and clothes, and when the time for marriage comes the master of the house provides the necessary money.

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922
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They are then turned out of the house, but are allowed to live in the vicinity, and continue to receive food and protection in return for whatever work is required of them. There are dependants of both sexes, and the unambitious often prefer to spend their whole lives in this manner. Slaves were treated in much the same manner, and children born in captivity were accounted free.

Motherhood is the great desire of the women, and every New Year the Mallams proclaim which will be the best months in that year for child-bearing. They have a strong belief in a medicine-man called "Soba," who lives in the bush at Lemo, between Bida and Zungeru, and who gives medicines to produce fertility. He is seldom to be found in person, but there are guardians in the bush who act as intermediaries.

When a child is born it is nourished on water, in which the leaves of the Aduruku tree (or the bark and leaves of some seven to ten different kinds of trees, the mixture is termed "dauri") have been boiled for three to seven days. It is poured into their mouths. This continues if the mother's milk is not good, for infants are never given the milk of any animal. After seven days the child is named, and both boys and girls are called after their father and after his father, though their first name be different. They are seldom called after their mother. The aboriginal custom is somewhat different, a girl being named on the eighth, a boy on the ninth day after birth. All the relatives assemble after dawn, certain roots are placed in a pot and beer poured over them. Some is poured as a libation on the ground, the head of the family then drinks some himself, conjuring the good spirit of medicine to protect the child's life, which he designates by name. The guests then consume two pots of beer, and a feast is held with the usual dancing, drumming and singing.

Boys are circumcised by the barber at the age of six or seven, after which they commence working on the farms. When they approach the age of puberty they leave their parents' house, and build themselves a separate hut.*

The eldest child, whether boy or girl, is hated by its parents; they will not look at it, and a large percentage die of neglect. They never call it anything individual, only "boy" or "girl," and the mother would refuse to feed it but that her husband's parents come and live with her for three months to see that she fulfils that duty. Sometimes they take the baby away with them and give it to some wet-nurse, but in no case is the first-born left with its parents after it is weaned. The grandfather always takes it. It has been asserted that the mother will not suckle her first-born child because her milk is unwholesome.

* Sapke and Mokwa.